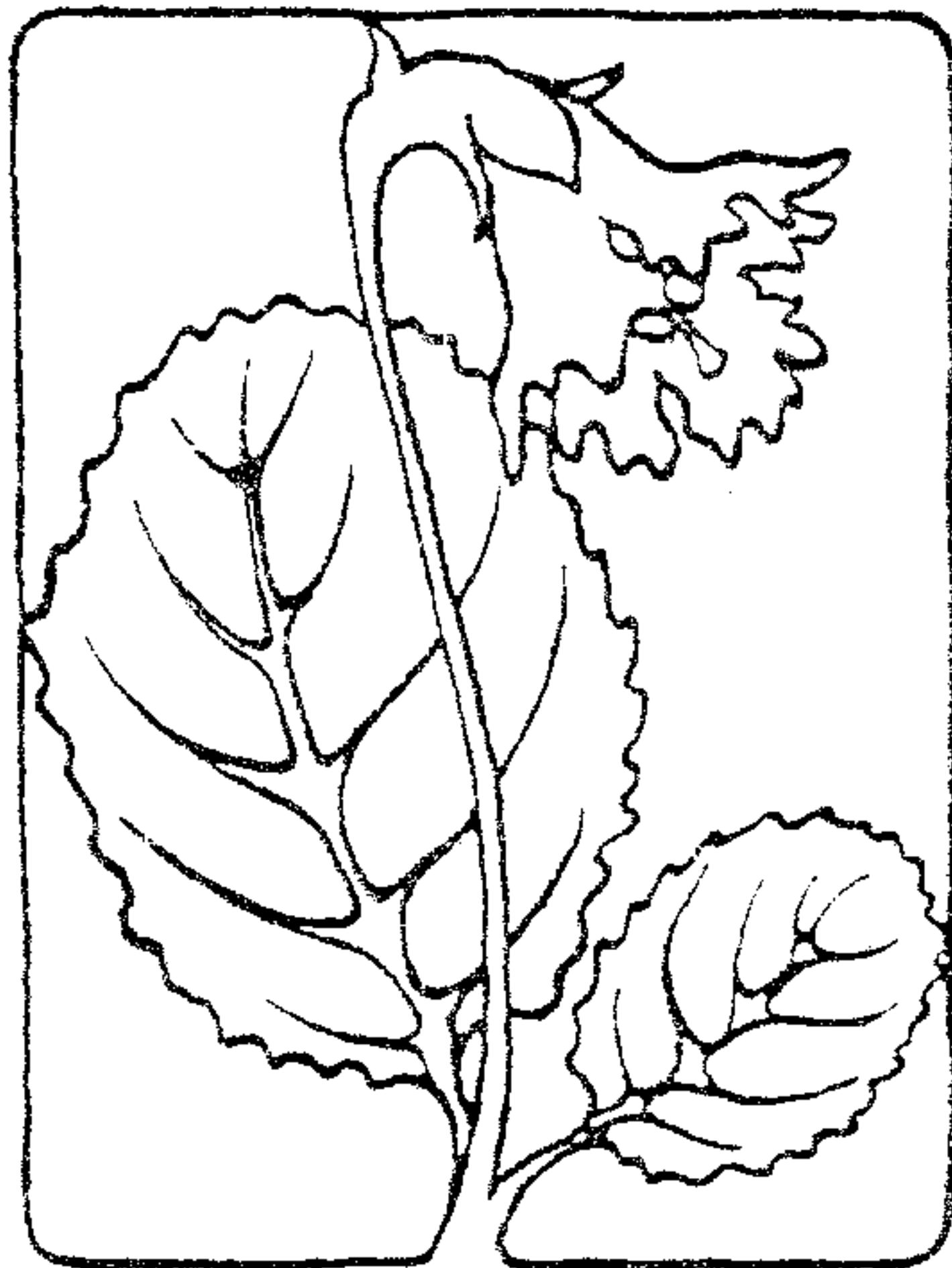


# SHORTIA

NEWSLETTER OF THE  
WESTERN CAROLINA BOTANICAL CLUB

AUTUMN 1985



HELEN TURNER, Editor

OFFICERS

President: Elton J. Hansens                      Treasurer: Margaret Kuhn  
Vice President: Millie Blaha                      Historian: Louise Foresman  
Secretary: Margaret Canfield

The Community Service Committee has recommended continued support of the University Botanical Gardens at Asheville, North Carolina Nature Conservancy, Southern Appalachian Nature Conservancy (Roan Mountain) and Friends of the Horsepasture. In the first half of the year we paid amounts equal to payments in 1984. Our club gifts are intended as tokens to show our interest in these organizations. We hope that individual members will also support these causes as they see fit.

In connection with the Annual Spring Wildflower Pilgrimage, members of our club have served as guides at Shinn's Gardens for several years. Recently Mr. Thomas Shinn sent us a gift to be used for club activities "as a token of appreciation for the favors which the Western Carolina Botanical Club has shown me".

Courses at Blue Ridge Technical College are always popular with our members. Club members are offering two courses atarting the first week in October.

Elton Hansens will teach KNOWING THE INSECTS on Tuesdays,  
1:00-4:00p; 10/8-12/17 (11 sessions) Life Science room 115.

Harry Logan will teach LANDSCAPING FOR THE HOMEOWNER on Thursdays,  
1:30-4:30p; 10/3-12/12 (10 sessions) Opportunity House.

I'm sure you were all surprised and delighted with the beautiful art work on the title page of the fall-winter schedule. It is the work of Aline Hansens. She also drew the spring peeper logo for the Nature Notes of Tom and Barbara Hallowell in the Times-News.

WELCOME - NEW MEMBERS  
(Hendersonville unless otherwise stated)

Henkel, Rudolph, 24 Rolling Oaks Drive . . . . . 693-0921  
Justice, Helen, 1630 Chara Circle . . . . . 693-7502  
Keirstead, Joan R. (Mrs. Richard A.)  
35 Brown Road, Pisgah Forest, N. C. 28768. . . . . 883-3425  
Kemp Robert and Jean C.  
1617 Hendersonville Road, Asheville, N.C. 28803. . . . .  
Macres, James and Mearl J., Box 93, Clinton, Tenn. 37716 . . 457-1864  
Murtfeldt, Harold and Betty, 130 Bent Tree . . . . . 693-5953  
Schultheis, Florence, P. C. Box 129, Etowah, N.C. 28729 . . . 891-7836

# LOOK AGAIN !

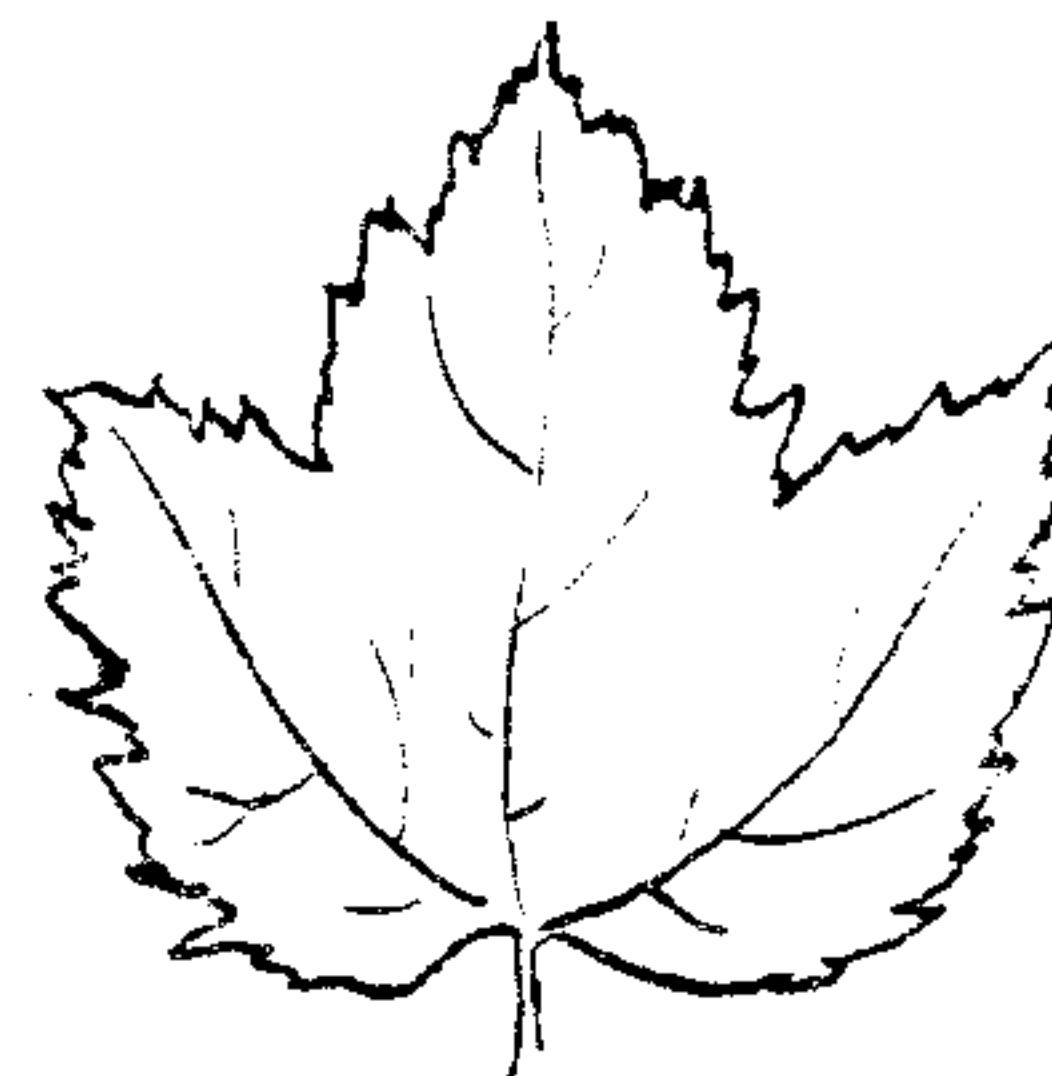
Shuffling through the woods on a bright October day, few of us can resist picking up a fallen leaf here and there. Not only are we fascinated by the sudden change from restful but monotonous green to riotous reds and yellows, but we seem more acutely aware than before of their distinctive shapes.

Try to guess what leaf will catch the eye before any other, and it probably will turn out to be a Red Maple--partly due to its brilliant coloring, but also because its five-lobed form has somehow become for us moderns a symbolic representation of a leaf, much as that of the acanthus was for the ancients. (It is interesting to speculate whether Canada's selection of it for its flag was cause or effect.)



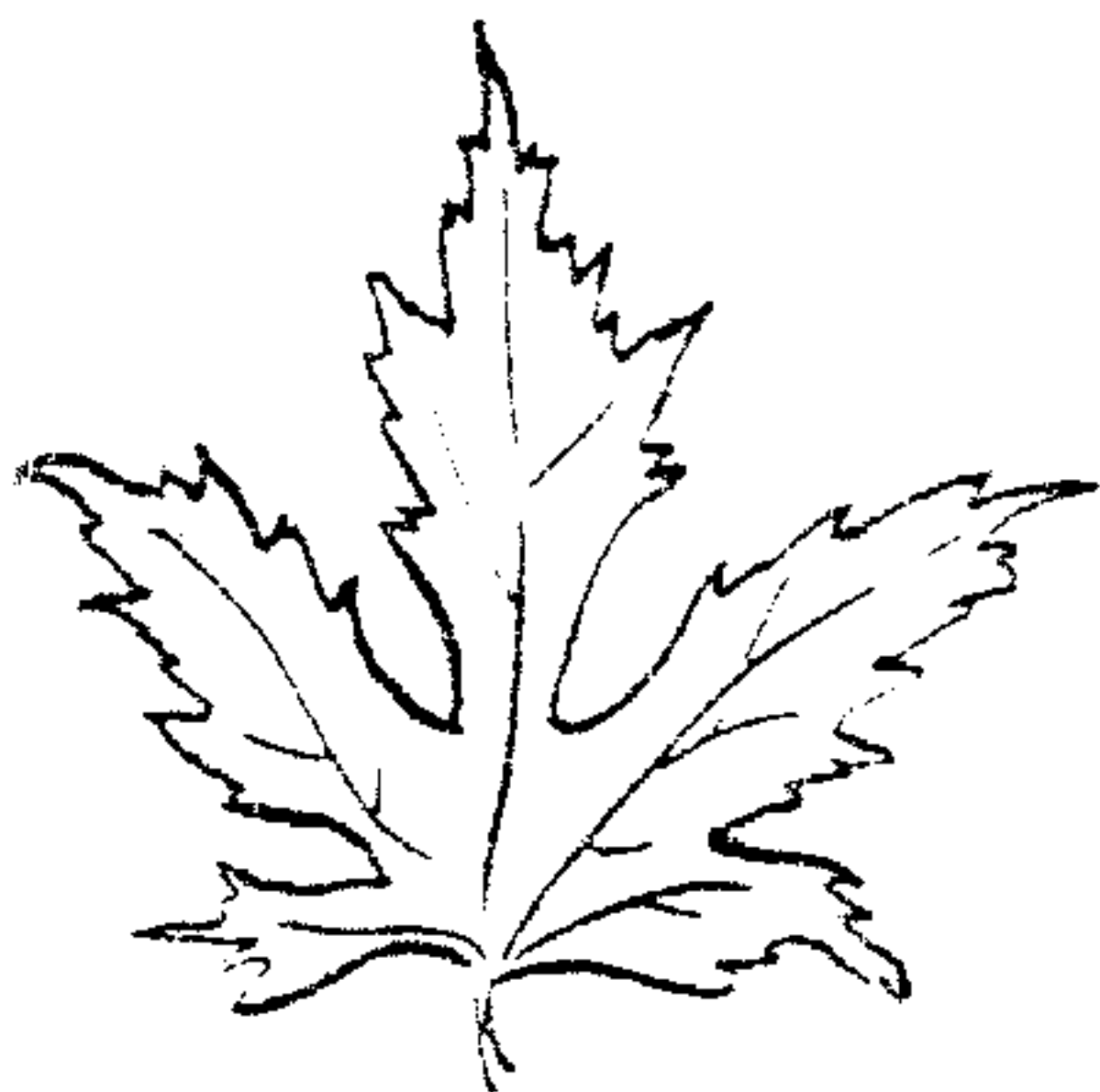
ACER RUBRUM

We are thinking here of the typical Red Maple, or Acer rubrum. There is a three-lobed form, more common in the South than northward, that is sometimes distinguished as var. trilobum, but the ones that resemble it even more closely belong to other species: Silver Maple (A. saccharinum) and Sugar Maple (A. saccharum).

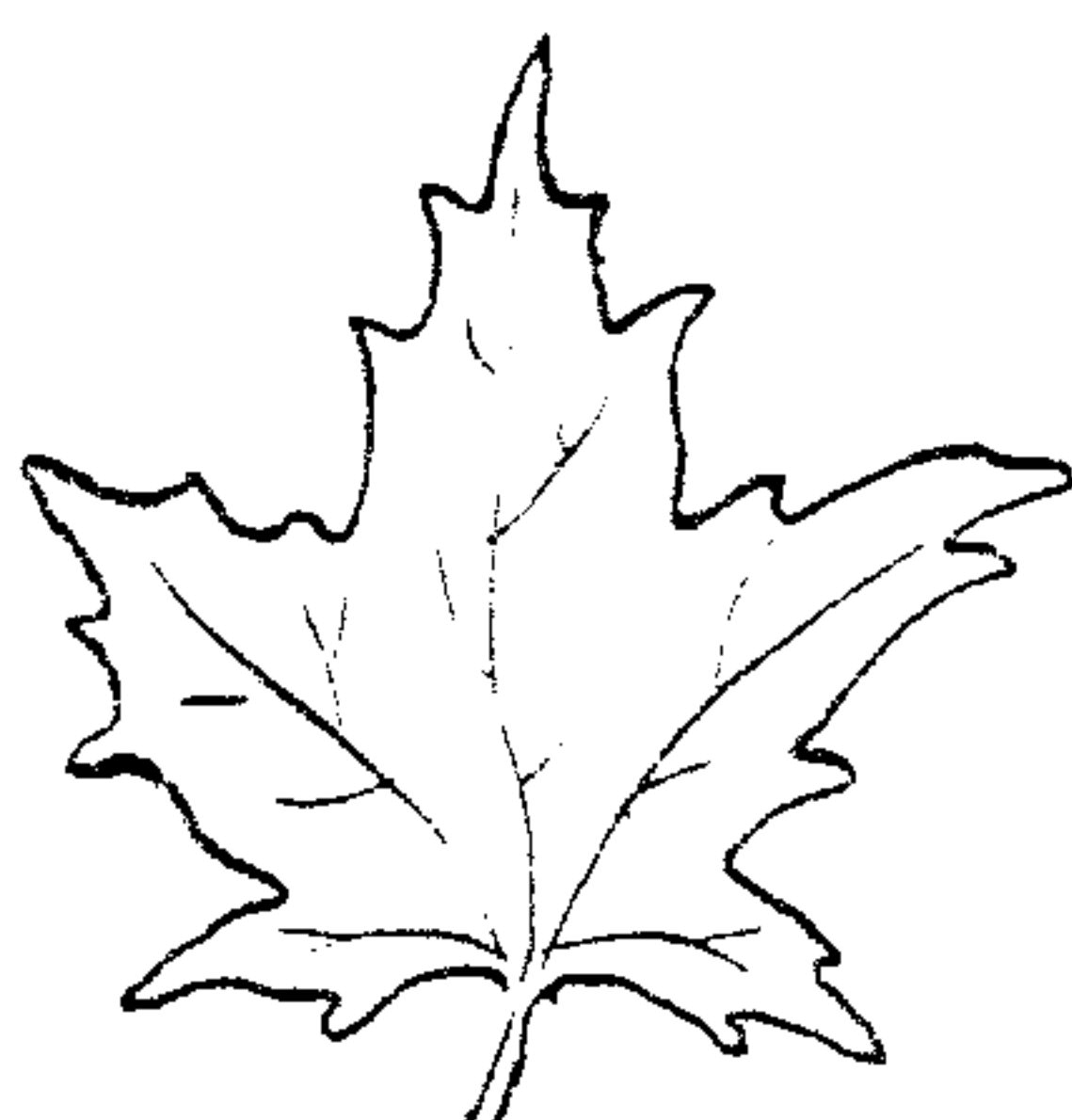


VAR. TRILOBUM

In Silver Maple, the principal differences are that the leaves are whitish beneath (accounting for the common name), and that the sinuses are much deeper so that the sides of the middle lobe taper inward toward the base. Also, they turn pale yellow in the fall, never achieving the vivid hues for which Red Maple is noted.



A. SACCHARINUM



A. SACCHARUM

Sugar Maple leaves are intermediate between the other two in that the sides of the center lobe are nearly parallel, and the teeth are large and very few. Their typical autumn color is a rich yellow-orange.

*Dick Smith*

## THEY CAME BEARING GIFTS

On June 20 three of us were hiking the mile of trail from Pisgah Inn to Buck Spring Gap Overlook looking for suitable specimen plants to record toward the development of our nature trail. We were alert to the changes since our last trip and watching for new flowers or those we overlooked.

Suddenly my attention was drawn in a different direction, and I called the others to observe a most interesting phenomenon. Tiny little glistening white, round-ended "footballs" about a quarter-inch long - some 15 or 20 of them - were drifting up and down and sideways, in irregular patterns, in and near the trail. A closer look revealed that they were being carried by small, delicate flies which were swarming along a short segment of the trail. They hovered from near ground level to a height of about eight feet.

I remembered that the males of certain dance flies (Family Empidae), as a part of the mating ritual, present such delicate gifts to the females before mating. One of the flies was captured and identified as an empid.

In R. F. Chapman's "The Insects, Structure and Function" the mechanisms of courtship are discussed (in part) as follows: "In predacious species courtship feeding may provide a distraction for the female so that the male himself is not eaten. Some male empids catch prey and then present this to the female, who feeds on it while he copulates with her. In other species this behaviour is ritualised and the male presents the female with an inanimate object, such as a petal, wrapped in a silken cocoon."

We, then, had seen a species of empid fly in which the males construct small silken cocoons. You ask how do they do this? You'll have to ask the fly.

Elton J. Hansens

A woman was buying a sheet of stamps at the post office recently and was given several sheets from which to choose. She selected an Audubon stamp. The customer behind her asked, "Who was Audubon?" The person behind that customer promptly said, "He was the man who planned the German road Autobahn."

A Reader's Digest article about Buckminster Fuller quoted his answer to his daughter as to what fire was. "Fire is sun unwinding from the tree's log. When the log fire pops sparks, it is letting go a sunny day of long ago, and doing it in a hurry."

## GREETINGS FROM THE BOTANICAL GARDENS AT ASHEVILLE

### The Garden for the Blind

Thanks to Jim Sconce and his three loyal helpers, Margaret Gehm, Andree Kubiniac and Marian Fabrey, the Garden for the Blind is more inviting than ever. Jim volunteered to take over the area this spring and made a detailed study of all 16 beds. All have been rearranged, supplemented, or replanted. The Herb Bed, a 4 ft. by 15 ft. plot, received a great rejuvenation when Sandy Mush Herb Nursery donated 30 different varieties, which are doing fine.

### The Cole Library

This beautiful room continues to receive additions, the latest being Jim Sconce's botany library, including the two Northeast volumes of Rickett's set of "Wildflowers of the United States", to accompany the two Southeast volumes donated by Western Carolina Botanical Club. All items are catalogued by UNC-A on the National Database computer network, including issues of SHORTIA, and all can be located easily on our shelves by using our new microfiche reader. We are also lending books now, and lending rules are posted on the bulletin board.

### AABGA Meets Here

When this is published, the American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboreta will have held its annual Southeast Regional Meeting here on August 23-24. Since this organization includes the largest botanical gardens in the country, we are honored to have provided facilities and speakers for their conference. Lowell Orbison spoke on "Use of Native Trees and Shrubs in the Garden" and Bob Kemp's subject was "Use of Wildflowers in the Garden". A question and answer period followed, led by Lin Murray and Jim Perry, and after lunch on Friday the group of 40 to 50 delegates was given a tour of the Gardens.

### Habenaria ciliaris

If you visited the Gardens during the first two weeks of August, you were rewarded with views of the Yellow Fringed-Orchid, one of several of our native orchids. Contrary to nearly all other native flora, it is found chiefly on the coastal plain and in the mountains rather than in one area or in adjacent areas. Why?

### Kudos for our Botanical Gardens at Asheville

During our Elderhostel week at the New York Botanical Gardens, we were delighted to receive favorable comments from several fellow students and instructors concerning our Gardens and our beautiful mountains. During one class I passed out 40 of our brochures, and from the questions raised, I expect to see several new visitors here. As for the NYBG, we were treated royally and found that a full week of study, lectures and tours is the only way even to begin to realize the immensity and complexity of the institution. I'll save the details for another issue.

### John Bartram

At another Elderhostel, the Univ. of Georgia's Marine Extension Service, Skidaway Island, I did a double-take at one of the nametags. Sure enough, it was John Bartram, the great, great several times grandson of the botanist. He was pleased to be recognized, and told of sending memorabilia to "Bartram's Garden" in Philadelphia.



Hal Schall

## RAMBLINGS - PEOPLE, PLANTS AND PLACES

Late spring and summer have seemed to pass very quickly. Way back in May, the hike up WHITESIDE MT. was a most pleasant one for six of us, where we saw the pale corydalis on the cliff, Catesby's trillium all over the hillsides, and sand myrtle on top. A foggy, overcast day on the SHUT-IN TRAIL provided a look at some 64 wildflowers, shrubs and trees, which 19 hikers enjoyed. A lovely forest trail was the BIG BUTT TRAIL, new to many of us. The mt. wood sorrel thickly covered the ground under the trees, and yellow clintonia grew prolifically, along with many other wildflowers - truly a trail to return to.

The DAVIDSON RIVER TRAIL is always a favorite hike, cool along the river on a hot day. Many flowers were blooming, among them penstemon, loosestrife, venus's looking-glass, giant solomon seal, and a not-often-seen cinquefoil (*Potentilla norvegica*); lunch on the rocks along the water. Rain predicted on a foggy, grey day when 20 of us went on the BUCK SPRINGS TRAIL, the one we are developing as a "nature trail" for the National Park Service. It cleared to a lovely, sunny day. Many flowers and shrubs were blooming along the way - galax, fly poison, bluets, and others.

EAST FORK OF THE PIGEON RIVER, another favorite hike, pleased 20 of us again as we saw the swamp azalea (*Rhododendron viscosum*) along the river, leatherflower, marsh St. John'swort, and white avens among many others. Nothing like a trail being washed off the hillside and stepping instead from rock to rock in the river; but we all made it, remember! The flowers were prolific (some 71) at Craggy Gardens, enjoyed by 20 of us. White cinquefoil (*Potentilla tridentata*) grew all over the hillsides, but the display of rhododendron was very disappointing this year. Our short, severe spell of low temperatures last winter translated into very few blossoms this summer. As always, the covered-dish get-together at HOLMES STATE FOREST was a happy, friendly affair; again superb food and good companionship.

ROAN MOUNTAIN always stands out as a special trip. Twelve of us, on a very warm day down below, enjoyed the top of the bald where the cool breezes waved through the long grass, a beautiful sight. We found the Gray's lilies as well as the mt. sandwort, white cinquefoil, tassel rue, appalachian avens, and the wild chervil. We enjoyed our lunches on the rocks in the meadow overlooking the whole panoply of the surrounding mountains. The 15 who went to the MT. HORTICULTURAL STATION found this an interesting, worthwhile trip - a facility in "our own backyard" many had hardly heard about or seen.

Again, in another season, 16 of us found ourselves on the BUCK SPRINGS TRAIL; this time false foxglove, starry campion, leatherflower, small enchanter's nightshade, and the frostweed, which confused us all 'til Dick, with his expertise, identified it. This plant is fairly rare and is not familiar to us. BEARWALLOW, the name somehow just envisions for us the myriads of flowers along a dusty road (some 83 this year). We saw spotted knapweed, asiatic day flower, woodland sunflower, sabatia, tall bellflower, bull thistle, catnip, and the tree of heaven, to name a very few. The rain held off for the INSECT WALK at Holmes State Forest, and those who attended found it most interesting. As Elton Hansens, the leader, said - there are always surprises on such a walk, so one anticipates the unusual.

A lovely hike along DANIEL CREEK-RIGHT FORK was enjoyed by 13 of us; some 71 wildflowers were blooming along the way, the highlight being the flowers of the yellow passion flower (*Passiflora lutea*) which we seldom see. Also seen, wild yellow flax, sensitive plant, rosinweed, and monkey flower. Well we hiked, shuttled cars, and saw the lilies on the SHUT-IN TRAIL, all things Anne Ulinski and I were not too sure would go smoothly, since this was our first time as leaders of the group - but we didn't lose anyone! We saw flowers in profusion - the hundreds of turk's cap lilies, false sunflowers, black snakeroot and joe-pye weed, all eight to ten feet in height. Also the beautiful obedient plant, false foxglove, featherbells, starry campion, basil balm, and many others.

So you see, these past three months were most rewarding ones for all those who look forward to seeing flowers growing in profusion in the mountains surrounding us. Come along for the early fall display.

Louise Foresman, Historian

\* \* \* \* \*

Help! Help!

We have no emergency but we would appreciate your help. We are looking for new ideas, new hike leaders, new programs. Please consider the following questions.

- Which were the 2 or 3 best hikes in the past year?
- Which were the 2 or 3 best programs in the past year?
- What new hikes (programs) can you suggest?
- Should we have more overnight ventures? How many?

Your comments on all aspects of the clubs program are solicited. Please write a note to Elton Hansens, 110 Old Kanuga Pl., H'ville or give your comments to any Program Committee member (names are in the last issue of Shortia).

Twice each year the Program Committee meets for most of a day to plan the schedule for the next 6 months. A surprising variety of meetings and hikes is conceived and arranged at these meetings. Each member then arranges the details and writes the description for several items in the schedule and Bob Taber types the schedule for duplication and mailing.

Please, give us your critiques and input by mid-October when we must begin work on the next schedule.

Elton Hansens, Pres.

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Please submit contributions for next issue by November 15, 1985

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